Missouri's children cannot be prepared to enter kindergarten unless families, communities, programs and schools provide safe environments and high-quality early learning experiences that promote the health and development of every child. Recognizing the importance of early experiences is not enough; there must be measurable indicators that enable early care and education (ECE) programs and elementary schools to assess children's abilities, track progress and inform policy on behalf of young children. School readiness indicators are important to data-based decision making and the improvements in access to, and the quality of, ECE programs.

A group of approximately 50 ECE stakeholders, preschool/kindergarten teachers and school leaders compiled the following list of indicators that emphasize aspects of safety, health and education. Stakeholders who participated in this activity were part of programs that receive funds from one of the following state entities: Children's Trust Fund (CTF); Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE); Department of Health and Senior Services (DHSS); and Department of Social Services (DSS).

Each indicator will be provided statewide and in one or more of these jurisdictions: county, city, school district, zip code. Data sources for Missouri's school readiness indicators include:

- Early Childhood Integrated Data System (ECIDS); system that maintains and reports aggregate information from publically-funded early childhood programs
- Missouri Student Information System (MOSIS); system for student information for preschool through grade 12
- DESE Core Data; system with district-level information entered or updated by Missouri public schools
- DESE kindergarten to grade 12 Statewide Longitudinal Data System (SLDS); system that maintains student assessment information
- WEBSPOE; system for Missouri First Steps early intervention program
- Missouri Department of Social Services; state agency responsible for the child welfare system
- Missouri Public Health Management System (MOPHIMS); system providing statistical health data for children of Missouri
- American Community Survey (ACS); data tables provided by the U.S. Census Bureau
- Missouri Census Data Center (MCDS); cooperative program among Missouri state agencies and the U.S. Bureau of the Census
- Missouri Secretary of State, State Library; state agency working with Missouri libraries
- Missouri Hospital Association; organization representing Missouri hospitals
- Missouri Spatial Data Information Service (MSDIS); system containing list of Missouri hospitals
- Feeding Missouri; network of Missouri food banks primarily responsible for supplying food pantries in Missouri
- Missouri Department of Mental Health; state agency overseeing Missouri mental health facilities and related services

Definitions and data sources listed as "in progress" are not defined at this time. Data sources listed as "emerging" are not included in the first phases of ECIDS.

READY CHILDREN

Is the Child Ready for School?

Domain	Indicator	Definition	Data Source
Developmental screening ▪ Physical (includes hearing and vision) ▪ Social/emotional ▪ Cognition ▪ Communication ▪ Adaptive	% children with age-appropriate skills and behaviors (by domain).	Results from a state-recommended screening tool.	ECIDS (emerging), from programs that conduct developmental screenings. Data fields will be the developmental domain and a designation that results were at or above cut-off score (e.g., Yes/No).
Kindergarten entry assessment (KEA) ▪ Physical well-being & motor development ▪ Social/emotional development ▪ Cognition & general knowledge ▪ Approaches toward learning ▪ Language & literacy	% children with age-appropriate skills and behaviors (by domain).	Results from a state-recommended KEA tool.	MOSIS, from schools that report KEA results. Data fields are learning domains and a designation that results are age-appropriate (e.g., Yes/No).
Overall kindergarten readiness	% children with overall age-appropriate readiness skills and behaviors.	Results from a state-recommended KEA tool.	MOSIS, from schools that report KEA results. Data field is a designation of overall readiness (e.g., Yes/No).
Health services	% infants born at normal birth weight.	Birth weight and/or low-very low birth weight status.	MOPHIMS provides counts for live births of less than 2,500 grams (e.g., five and one-half pounds).
Health insurance	% children who are insured.	Public or private health insurance coverage.	Census ACS table S2701 - "Health Insurance Coverage Status."

READY FAMILIES

DOES THE FAMILY'S EXPERIENCES AND HOME ENVIRONMENT PREPARE THE CHILD TO ENTER SCHOOL?

DOMAIN	INDICATOR	DEFINITION	DATA SOURCE
Well-being	% children with recommended number of well-check visits from birth to age 5.	Met number of well-check visits recommended for the child's age.	ECIDS, from programs that collect child well-check information. Data fields are the dates and interval of visits (e.g., one month, two month).
Out of home placement	% children in foster care.	Children in state's custody and out of home care (aggregate count).	Department of Social Services reporting of children in state's custody (Census data will be used to calculate percentage).
	% children who are homeless.	Children who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence.	ECIDS, from programs that report homelessness. Data field is the designation of homeless (e.g., Yes/No).
Access to health care	% mothers who obtained adequate prenatal care	In progress.	In progress.
Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs)	% children screened for ACEs.	In progress.	Emerging.
	% children who experienced at least one of the ACEs.	In progress.	Emerging.
Poverty level	% children 5 and under living at, or below, the federal poverty level.	Family's adjusted gross income and family size (aggregate count).	ACS Table B17001 - Poverty Status in the Past 12 Months by Sex and Age. (data field is percent of poverty level)
Family engagement	# families trained on approaches that promote strong families (e.g., Strengthening Families Protective Factors Framework).	In progress.	In progress.

READY COMMUNITIES

Does the community support children and families to be ready for school?

Domain	Indicator	Definition	Data Source
Community supports	There is a library in the family's community. There is a hospital in the family's community. There is a food pantry in the family's community. There is a mental health center in the family's community.	Families have access to health and early education foundational supports in their community.	Secretary of State database for public libraries in Missouri. Missouri Spatial Data Information Service (MSDIS). Feeding Missouri. Missouri Department of Mental Health database of mental health facilities in Missouri.
Safe environments	Rate of substantiated child abuse and neglect cases for children birth to age 5.	Rate of children with a confirmed case of child abuse/neglect (CA/N) in a particular county (aggregate count).	Department of Social Services reporting of confirmed CA/N cases (aggregate count). Census data will be used to calculate rate.
Lead poisoning	% children screened for lead exposure. % children screened with lead poisoning.	Rate of children screened for lead exposure (aggregate count). Rate of children with lead poisoning (aggregate count).	Department of Health and Senior Services database for MOHPHIMS. Department of Health and Senior Services database for MOHPHIMS.
Affordable housing	% families who have affordable housing.	Rate of families who spent 20% or less of the income on housing (aggregate count).	ACS tables -B25072 Age of Householder by Gross Rent as a Percentage of Household Income, and B25093 Age of Householder by Selected Monthly Owner Costs as a Percentage of Household Income.

READY ECE SERVICES

DO ECE SERVICES SUPPORT CHILDREN AND FAMILIES TO BE READY FOR SCHOOL?

DOMAIN	INDICATOR	DEFINITION	DATA SOURCE
Home visiting	% families participating in: ▪ Parent education program ▪ Home visiting model program	Families participating in a home visiting program.	ECIDS, from programs that report participation data for home visiting programs. Data fields are service begin and end dates (census data will be used to calculate percentage).
Public preschool	% children participating in: ▪ State preschool ▪ Part B 619/ECSE ▪ Title I % children participating in private preschool program.	Children participating in a public preschool program. In progress.	ECIDS, from schools that report participation data for preschool programs. Data fields are service begin and end dates (census data will be used to calculate percentage). In progress.
Child care subsidy	% children birth to age 5 in poverty and receiving child care subsidy.	In progress.	Emerging.
Early intervention (Part C/First Steps)	% children participating in the First Steps program.	Children with an Individualized Family Service Plan.	ECIDS, from early intervention program. Data fields are service begin and exit date. Census data will be used to calculate percentage.
Qualified professionals	% qualified professionals delivering services for children birth to age 5.	Professionals who are up-to-date on required training.	In progress.
High-quality programs	% programs participating in the Quality Assurance Report (QAR).	In progress.	Emerging.

Domain	Indicator	Definition	Data Source
High-quality programs, continued	% public and private programs measured as high-quality by the QAR.	In progress.	Emerging.
Family engagement	% programs that offer opportunities for parents to participate in program oversight.	Early childhood programs that offer parent leadership training.	In progress.
	% professionals trained on approaches that promote strong families (e.g., Strengthening Families Protective Factors Framework).	Professionals who completed training that promotes strengthening families, strong families.	In progress.

READY SCHOOLS

Is the School REady for the Child and Family?

Domain	Indicator	Definition	Data Source
Transition planning	% schools with policies that support successful transition to kindergarten.	Schools with policy for transition into kindergarten.	Emerging.
	% schools that implement a process of informing family and community members about the importance of early learning experiences before kindergarten entry.	Schools with schedule of events for family and community activities.	Emerging.
Kindergarten entry	% schools that used a state-recommended kindergarten entry assessment.	Schools using state-recommended KEA tool.	DESE Core Data, from schools that report using a KEA tool.

Domain	Indicator	Definition	Data Source
Class size	% schools with an appropriate average student-teacher ratios.	Schools reporting student-teacher ratio is at or less than 17 to 1.	State education database for district reporting. Data field is classroom size for K-2.
Developmentally-appropriate practices	% schools using an evidence-based curricula and/or developmentally appropriate practices in kindergarten that includes scaffolding the learning of all children.	Schools using evidence-based curricula that supports learning of all children in the kindergarten classroom.	Emerging.
Special education	% children in kindergarten in special education who were not previously in Early Intervention (Part C/First Steps) or ECSE services (Part B/619).	Child did not participate in First Steps or ECSE prior to entering kindergarten, but was determined eligible for special education during the kindergarten year.	WEBSPOE for children participating in First Steps. MOSIS for students participating in ECSE and attending kindergarten.
Third-grade achievement	% third-grade students who scored proficient or above in English Language Arts. % third-grade students who scored proficient or above in Math.	Rate of third graders who scored proficient or above in English Language Arts (aggregate count). Rate of third graders who scored proficient or above in Math (aggregate count).	DESE Kindergarten to 12 Statewide Longitudinal Data System (SLDS) – Data store containing information regarding schools and students. DESE Kindergarten to 12 Statewide Longitudinal Data System (SLDS) – Data store containing information regarding schools and students.

Missouri DEPARTMENT OF ELEMENTARY & SECONDARY EDUCATION™

Children's Trust Fund — Missouri's Foundation For Child Abuse Prevention

Missouri DHSS Department of Health and Senior Services

Missouri Department of SOCIAL SERVICES